

The Sad Story of a Man Who Lost His Anointing

by Zac Poonen

The sad story of Saul's ministry serves as a warning to servants of God to remain humble, faithful, and connected to God in order to avoid losing their anointing and effectiveness in ministry.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 10:1

Topics: "Spiritual Failure", "Godly Humility"

Description

Zac Poonen reflects on the rise and fall of Saul, a man chosen by God to be king over Israel. Saul started as a humble and ordinary man, faithful in his work, wise, respectful of God's servants, and humble in his opinion of himself. Despite having many good qualities, Saul lost his connection with God, the anointing of the Spirit, his humility, character, and eventually his kingdom, serving as a cautionary tale for many servants of God today who may also start well but lose their way.

Transcript

When we look at the ministry of Saul, we see Saul initially as a humble, young man who had no interest in becoming king. The people of Israel wanted a king. And one day, the Lord told Samuel: "Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be king over My people Israel" (1 Sam. 9:15-17). When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, "Behold, this is the man." Samuel spoke to Saul and "took a flask of oil, poured it on his head and said, 'The Lord has anointed you a ruler over His inheritance' 1 Sam. 10:1). Saul was absolutely surprised, for he did not expect this at all. He was after all, just an ordinary man

But for God to pick him out would indicate that God had seen many good qualities in him. And so Samuel told him, "The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you mightily, you will prophesy, and you will be changed into another man" (1 Sam. 10:6). This is indeed a wonderful word that describes what happens to a man when he is filled with the Holy Spirit: He is changed into another man. This is what all of us need to experience continually.

But Saul had to be recognised by the people also as the man whom God had chosen to be their king. So Samuel called all the people together and told them that a king would be selected by God from their midst. Samuel did not name Saul. Instead he cast lots - by tribes first, then by families and then by individual names - believing that the Lord would sovereignly control the lot. The lot finally fell on Saul. When they

looked for Saul and they couldn't find him because he had disappeared. He had hidden himself, because he did not want to become the king.

Notice ten good qualities that Saul had.

1. He was faithful and thorough in his work. In 1 Sam. 9:3, we read that his father Kish had lost his donkeys. Kish told Saul to go and search for them. Saul conducted a thorough search in all the hill country of Ephraim and the land of Shalishah. His father had given him a job to do, and he did it thoroughly. He didn't just go looking for the donkeys for a few minutes and come back saying, "I can't find them." God picks up people who are faithful in small matters like looking for lost donkeys!

2. He was wise. When a long time had elapsed and he still hadn't found any of the donkeys, he told his servant, "Let's go back because my father will now be more concerned about us than the donkeys." (1 Sam. 9:5).

3. He knew how to respect God's servants. When his servant suggested that they go and meet a servant of God in the city, Saul said, "Let's take a present for him" (1 Sam. 9:7).

4. He had a humble opinion about himself. When Samuel told Saul about God having chosen him, he replied, "Who am I? Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?" (1 Sam. 9:21).

5. He did not boast. When his uncle asked him what Samuel had said, Saul told his uncle that Samuel said his donkeys had been found, but he did not tell his uncle about Samuel anointing him as king (1 Sam. 10:15, 16).

6. He stayed in the background. When they selected him to be the king he hid himself in the baggage. He was a man who wanted to be hidden (1 Sam. 10:22).

7. He was longsuffering. When Saul went to his house, certain worthless men said, "How can this man deliver us?" They despised him and did not bring any present. But he kept silent even though he was publicly anointed as king (1 Sam. 10:27).

8. He was zealous to help those in need. When certain people of Israel were attacked by their enemies, they sent messengers to Saul, who immediately gathered people to go and help them (1 Sam. 11:1-7).

9. He was courageous. Saul went and fought the Ammonite enemies courageously and saved the Israelites (1 Sam. 11:11).

10. He forgave his enemies. When Saul came back victorious from the battle, some people wanted to kill those who had earlier rejected Saul as king. But he would not allow anyone to be killed (1 Sam. 11:12,13).

This was the man God chose, who had all these wonderful qualities. Yet in a few years he had lost his contact with God, lost the anointing of the Spirit, lost his humility, lost his character, lost his kingdom and lost everything. This is the sad story of many servants of God today too, who started out well.

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